

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, 29-30 and 32-50 are pending in the present application. Claims 1-13, 29-30 and 32-50 have been rejected. Claims 1-13, 29-30, 32-48 and 50 have been canceled. Claim 49 has been amended. Claims 51-59 have been added.

I. Summary of Telephonic Interview

Examiners Huynh and Perveen are hereby acknowledged and thanked for the courtesy extended during the personal interview on January 17, 2006, at the United States Patent and Trademark Office, between the Examiners, Keith Moore, and the undersigned attorney. The pending claims, current Final Office Action and prior art were all discussed during this personal interview, with particular focus on claims 1, 13, 49 and 50, as well as that which is clearly taught by the primary prior art reference used, U.S. Patent No. 4,516,777 to Nikora ("Nikora"). Agreement was reached with respect to Nikora and the other recited references not teaching all steps of dependent claim 50, which has been incorporated into independent claim 49 herein. Agreement was also reached with respect to there being other issues regarding the present claims in light of the pending rejections over Nikora and other recited references. Because these other issues would likely require further search and consideration, however, it was also agreed that these issues should be addressed separately from the disposal of claims 49 and 50 herein. Accordingly, all other claims have been canceled, and a separate continuation application has been filed to address these other claims.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 10-13 and 49-50 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nikora. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

As noted in the interview summary, it was agreed that at least claim 50 was allowable over the prior art of record. As such, claim 50 has been incorporated into independent claim 49, such that claim 49 as amended is now allowable over the prior art of record. All other claims have been canceled without prejudice in order to expedite the prosecution of independent claim 49.

Although the continuation application that has been filed contains claims that are similar, but not identical, to many of the claims canceled herein, Applicants wish to address several of the positions taken in the pending final rejection for purposes of facilitating the prosecution of similar claims in the continuation case. Applicants first note that the device of Nikora is not a "gaming machine" as that term of art is used in the gaming industry. Rather, Nikora is directed toward an Atari-style home video game system, which is substantially different than the wager based type of gaming machine of the present claims. Specific examples of such a gaming machine can be found in now canceled claim 13. Further, many of the present claims also include a "master gaming controller," which is another term of art used for the primary processing component of a wager based gaming machine.

In addition, Nikora teaches of game cartridges that are inserted into a magazine, which is in turn inserted into a slot in a console. Although Applicants do not agree with the characterization of the console of Nikora as a "main communication board" and the game cartridges as "daughterboards," these characterizations still do not account for those claim elements that require the main communication board itself to have a plurality of receptor slots, rather than a magazine or some other intermediary device. Furthermore, Nikora does not teach or suggest a "main communication board adapted to facilitate communication via various communication formats," as there appears to be only one form of communication format in Nikora. Applicants also point out that appropriate motivations to combine

references in the manner proposed have not been provided, particularly with respect to those combinations involving many non-analogous references.

In addition, many elements of the now canceled claims have not been accounted for in the pending final rejection. Applicants thus reincorporate remarks from prior responses accordingly. Because the newly filed claims of the continuation application have been streamlined and are not identical to the claims canceled herein, however, Applicants await a first action on these new claims before specifically addressing potential further issues.

III. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 6-7, 33, 35-36, 38-39 and 44 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nikora in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,587,909 to Olarig, et al. ("Olarig"). In addition, claims 5, 29-30, 32, 34, and 37 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nikora in view of Olarig and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,741,183 to Acres, et al. ("Acres"). Further, claims 40, 42-43, 45 and 47-48 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nikora in view of Olarig and further in view of Acres and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,805,634 to Wells, et al. ("Wells"). Still further, claims 41 and 46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nikora, in view of Olarig, further in view of Acres, further in view of Wells, and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 20050223090 to Ewing, et al. ("Ewing"). Finally, claims 8-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nikora alone.

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

In light of the cancellation of all claims without prejudice in favor of expediting the prosecution of claim 49, however, it is respectfully submitted that these rejections have been rendered moot. Applicants again note that a continuation case with similar claims has been filed, although these claims are not identical

IV. New Claims

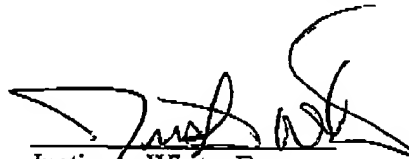
Claims 51-59 are new. Support for each of these new claims can be found throughout the specification as filed. Accordingly, these claims are patentable over the prior art for at least the same reasons given for independent claim 49, from which each depends.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in proper form and condition for patentability, and request a Notification of Allowance to that effect. It is believed that no fee is due at this time. Should any fee be required for any reason related to this paper or application, however, then the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge said fee to Deposit Account No.50-0388, referencing Docket No. IGT1P022. The Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below with any questions or concerns relating to this application.

Respectfully Submitted,
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